

HOUSE RESOLUTION 299

By Hood

A RESOLUTION to honor and congratulate the pastor and congregation of Belle Aire Baptist Church upon their 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.

WHEREAS, it is appropriate that the members of this legislative body should recognize and pay tribute to those venerable religious institutions and their congregations who, through their unflagging capacity for love, dedication of spirit, and faith in God, strive to enrich the lives of people in their communities; and

WHEREAS, throughout its 50-year history, the Belle Aire Baptist Church has been one such institution, proudly serving Murfreesboro by providing respite, refuge, and direction for many generations of its members, and serving as a link to join the oft-remembered past with the much-anticipated future; and

WHEREAS, the first services of the Church were held on March 7, 1954 at Woodfin's Funeral Home Chapel under the leadership of Reverend Johnnie V. Braswell, with a congregation of 29 men and women; and

WHEREAS, on May 30, 1954, twelve weeks after that first blessed meeting, Belle Aire Baptist Church was officially organized as a Baptist Church and affiliated with the Concord Baptist Association, the Tennessee Baptist Convention, and the Southern Baptist Convention; and

WHEREAS, from its very beginning, reaching lost people through the Gospel of Jesus Christ has been the fundamental purpose of the church, and ministering to the students of Middle Tennessee State University, then known as Middle Tennessee State College, has been an integral part of that goal as the members have assisted many college students in their Christian walks; and

WHEREAS, the Church has been blessed with spiritually gifted leaders who have tenderly shepherded its flock of worshipers and faithfully supported its programs and activities; and

WHEREAS, the faithful members and leaders of Belle Aire Baptist Church have received many blessings during the past fifty years, they have seen the spiritual and numerical growth of their membership, the development of many enriching programs for a wide range of age groups, and the decisions of hundreds to follow Jesus Christ as Lord; and

WHEREAS, reaching beyond the local community, the members of Belle Aire Baptist Church have journeyed to the far corners of the world to spread the Gospel, and the ministry of the church continues to grow and prosper as large numbers of young people answer the call to full time Christian service as ministers and church leaders; and

WHEREAS, throughout its history, the church has benefited from the use of many facilities, ranging from a borrowed funeral home chapel and a converted military barracks to more conventional buildings; currently the church has a large facility at 1307 North Rutherford Boulevard that meets the needs of the congregation, as well as providing room for future growth; and

WHEREAS, having grown from twenty-nine members to over two thousand members, the pastors and staff of the church have diligently worked to extend worship services to many groups in Murfreesboro and to establish their ministry throughout the nation and world; and

WHEREAS, Belle Aire Baptist Church has sponsored the founding of the Scenic Drive Baptist Church and the Korean Baptist Church in Murfreesboro and is now preparing to sponsor the formation of a new Baptist church near the campus of Rutgers University in New Jersey; and

WHEREAS, currently engaged in a year-long anniversary celebration, Belle Aire Baptist Church will commemorate the exact day and hour of its birth through an extraordinary worship service on March 7, 2004; and

WHEREAS, Belle Aire Baptist Church is among those institutions upon which a just and orderly society is based; it is a focal point for our citizens to worship their creator as a

community of faith and from which they reach out to the secular community as a response to God's saving grace; and

WHEREAS, Belle Aire Baptist Church is truly one of the great religious institutions of our State, and the members of this exceptional congregation should be appropriately honored for their 50 years of exemplary service to their fellow Christians and to the good people of Murfreesboro and Tennessee; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED THIRD GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, that we join with Reverend Dean Sisk and all pastors, staff, leaders, and members, both past and present, who constitute that community of faith known as Belle Aire Baptist Church, in remembering and honoring 50 years of dedicated and fruitful work in the vineyards of the Lord Jesus Christ.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.